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~~WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:~~

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**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A user authentication apparatus, comprising:  
a control unit controlling comparison of identifying information input by a user with characteristic identifying information stored in a storage medium storing authentication information for applications corresponding to the characteristic identifying information; and  
a set unit setting, as input information for an authentication system of one of the applications, authentication information of the one application the storage medium sends responsive to a result of the comparison to the set unit.

10 2. A user authentication apparatus, comprising:  
a control unit controlling comparison of identifying information input by a user with characteristic identifying information stored in a storage medium storing authentication information for applications corresponding to the characteristic identifying information;  
an update unit controlling update of the authentication information of one of the applications selected by the user to new authentication information input by the user responsive to a result of the comparison; and  
a processing unit synchronously updating the authentication information stored in the selected application and the authentication information stored in the storage medium to the new authentication information input by the user.

25 3. A user authentication apparatus, comprising:  
a control unit controlling comparison identifying information input by a user with characteristic identifying information stored in a storage medium storing a plurality of certificates for applications;  
an instructing unit instructing the storage medium to send a desired certificate in response to a result of the comparison; and  
a providing unit providing the certificate sent from the storage medium to the application in response to the instruction.

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10 4. A user authentication system, comprising:  
a storage medium storing authentication information for applications and characteristic identifying information; and  
a control unit comparing identifying information input by a user with the characteristic identifying information stored in the storage medium; and  
a set unit setting in one of the applications selected by the user the authentication information the storage medium sends responsive to a result of the comparison to the set unit, as input information for authentication by the one selected application.

10 5. A user authentication system, comprising:  
a storage medium storing authentication information for applications and characteristic identifying information; and  
a control unit comparing identifying information input by a user with the characteristic identifying information stored in the storage medium;  
an update unit controlling update of the authentication information of one of the applications selected by the user to new authentication information input by the user responsive to a result of the comparison; and  
a processing unit synchronously updating the authentication information stored in the selected application and the authentication information stored in the storage medium to the new authentication information input by the user.

25 6. A process of user authentication, comprising:  
comparing identifying information input by a user with characteristic identifying information stored in a storage medium storing authentication information for applications; and  
setting in one of the applications selected by the user the authentication information the storage medium sends responsive to a result of the comparison, as input information for authentication by the one selected application

A process of user authentication, comprising:  
comparing identifying information input by a user with characteristic identifying information stored in a storage medium storing authentication information for applications;  
controlling update of the authentication information of one of the applications selected by the user to new authentication information input by the user responsive to a result of the comparison; and  
synchronously updating the authentication information stored in the selected application and the authentication information stored in the storage medium to the new authentication information input by the user.

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8. A storage medium storing an authentication information used to authenticate a user, comprising:

an interface unit exchanging information with an external device;  
a memory unit storing identifying information for applications, the authentication information corresponding to the applications and characteristic identifying information;  
a comparing unit comparing identifying information received from the external device with the stored characteristic information; and  
a processing unit supplying the authentication information for applications to the external device in response to a result of the comparison.

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9. A computer readable storage controlling a computer and comprising a process of:

comparing identifying information input by a user with characteristic identifying information stored in a storage medium storing authentication information for applications; and  
setting the authentication information the storage medium sends in response to a result of the comparison as input information to one of the applications for authentication.

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10. A computer readable storage controlling a computer and comprising a process  
of:

comparing identifying information input by a user with characteristic identifying  
information stored in a storage medium storing authentication information for applications;

controlling update of the authentic information about one of the applications selected by  
the user to new authentication information input by the user in response to a result of the  
comparison; and

10 synchronously updating the authentication information stored in the selected application  
and the authentication information stored in the storage medium for the selected application to  
the new input authentication information.

11. A user authentication apparatus, comprising:

a control unit controlling comparison of identifying information input by a user with  
characteristic identifying information stored in a storage medium storing authentication  
information for applications corresponding to the characteristic identifying information; and

a set unit setting in one of the applications selected by the user the authentication  
information the storage medium sends responsive to a result of the comparison to the set unit,  
as input information for authentication by the one selected application, wherein the control unit  
further comprises:

a providing unit providing the identifying information input by the user to the storage  
medium; and

25 a receiving unit receiving the result of the comparison the storage medium sends  
responsive to the result of the comparison; and wherein the storage medium further comprises  
a comparing unit comparing the input identifying information provided to the storage medium  
with the characteristic identifying information stored in the storage medium.

12. The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising:

a display unit displaying application names as a selection items if the result of the  
comparison is matching; and

a selecting unit controlling selection of one of the applications by the user, wherein the set unit sets the authentication information of the selected application as input information to the selected application for authentication.

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13. The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising:

a requesting unit requesting from the storage medium to send information about the applications, wherein the display controlling unit displays as the selection items the information received from the storage medium about the applications in response to the request.

10 14. A computer readable storage controlling a computer and comprising a process of:

comparing with a comparing unit identifying information input by a user with characteristic identifying information stored in a storage medium storing authentication information for applications;

providing the identifying information input by the user to the storage medium;

receiving a result of the comparison the storage medium sends responsive to a result of the comparison; and

setting, as input information for an authentication system of one of the applications, the authentication information the storage medium sends in response to the result of the comparison.

25 15. The computer readable storage of claim 14, further comprising:

selecting the one application from a selection items, wherein the process of setting comprises setting, as the input information for the authentication system of the selected one application, the authentication information of the selected one application.

30 16. The computer readable storage of claim 15, further comprising:

generating a request to the storage medium to send information about the applications, wherein the display controlling unit displays as the selection items the information about the application the storage medium sends in response to the request.

17. A user authentication apparatus, comprising:

a storage medium storing characteristic identifying information and authentication information for applications and comparing identifying information input by a user with the characteristic identifying information stored in the storage medium; and

5 a set unit setting in one of the applications selected by the user the authentication information the storage medium sends to the set unit responsive to a result of the comparison as input information for authentication by the one selected application.

10 18. A user authentication apparatus, comprising:

a storage medium storing characteristic identifying information and authentication information for applications and comparing identifying information input by a user with the characteristic identifying information stored in the storage medium; and

15 a set unit setting, as input information for authentication system of one of the applications, the authentication information the storage medium sends to the set unit responsive to a result of the comparison.

20 19. A user authentication apparatus, comprising:

a control unit controlling comparison of identifying information input by a user with characteristic identifying information stored in a storage medium storing authentication information for applications corresponding to the characteristic identifying information; and

25 a set unit setting in one of the applications selected by the user the authentication information the storage medium sends responsive to a result of the comparison to the set unit as input information for the authentication system of the one selected application for authentication by the one selected application.

20 20. A user authentication apparatus, comprising:

a storage medium storing characteristic identifying information and certificates for applications and comparing identifying information input by a user with the characteristic identifying information stored in the storage medium; and

a set unit setting, as input information for authentication system of one of the applications, the certificate the storage medium sends to the set unit responsive to a result of the comparison.